

## 3.3 Political Change

1945-1980



Did the televised debate decide the 1960 election?

# Politics Change

By 1960, Americans had been riding a wave of optimism for most of the 50s. In the 1960 election, Americans would choose a president to continue the postwar prosperity.

Would it be Republican Richard Nixon, Eisenhower's Vice President of 8 years, or the young and glamorous Democrat John F. Kennedy?

As Americans watched the two candidates in the first televised presidential debate, many chose the tan, young, relaxed Kennedy.

# The Space Race



By the time Kennedy had spent a year in office, the Soviets had launched the *Sputnik* satellite, a dog, and a human being into orbit.

Congress reacted by creating NASA and funding math and science education.

Kennedy vowed to place a man on the moon within the decade.



# Kennedy's Foreign Policy

As Kennedy faced Cold War challenges with the Bay of Pigs invasion, Berlin Wall and Cuban Missile Crisis, he attempted to improve US relations with the rest of the world.

The Peace Corps was established to assist underdeveloped countries.

Kennedy's Alliance for Progress program attempted to improve relations with Latin America.





Many young Americans took up the call and joined the Peace Corps to provide service to developing countries.



# Kennedy's New Frontier

With conservatives controlling Congress, Kennedy was not able to achieve all of his domestic goals, but he was successful in extending some of the Democrat's New Deal policies.

Kennedy signed legislation raising minimum wage, increasing Social Security, raising money for mental health research, and developing rural areas.

Kennedy was able to show some support for civil rights, but risked losing Southern Democrats in Congress.



President John F. Kennedy and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy in Dallas, TX on November 22, 1963.





With Kennedy's assassination in Nov. 1963, Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson would become America's next leader.

# Johnson's Great Society

Johnson declared a “War on Poverty” and began the largest reform package since FDR’s New Deal:

- ★ Civil Rights Act banned discrimination and ended segregation.
- ★ National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities used public money to fund artists, galleries, and public television.
- ★ Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) sent volunteers to work in struggling communities.
- ★ Housing and Urban Development (HUD) helped provide low-income housing for the poor.
- ★ Medicare was created to ease the burden of health care costs for the elderly.
- ★ Head Start worked to improve opportunities for children in poorer families and communities.

# War Takes Its Toll

Johnson's domestic programs were overshadowed by his aggressive interventions in Vietnam.

Conservatives attacked Johnson for his social programs and liberals attacked him for the war in Vietnam.

As more money was diverted to war, Johnson's programs suffered.

In 1968, Johnson declined to run for re-election. As Democrats debated who would run, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King were assassinated.

The streets erupted into riots that year.



















# Election of 1968

Protesters clashed with police at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago as it became apparent that the Party would not nominate an antiwar candidate.

Urban riots erupted upon the news of Martin Luther King's death. The assassination two months later of JFK's brother Robert Kennedy further disheartened the civil rights movement.

Republican Richard Nixon ran on a campaign to restore law and order and support the troops in Vietnam.

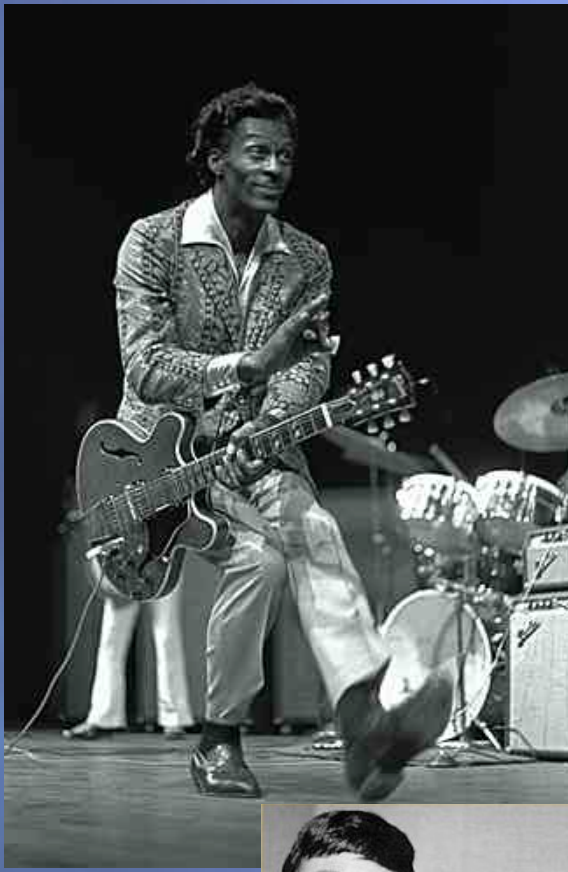
# Rock 'n Roll



With the economic prosperity of the 1950s, teenagers had money to spend on records.

By the end of the decade, music defined the generation gap between old and young.

Looking for a white artist who could capture the black sound of rhythm and blues, producers found Elvis Presley - a spawn of the devil as far as parents were concerned!



# Rock 'n Roll

As the markets opened up, artists such as Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Fats Domino, Buddy Holly, and Jerry Lee Lewis rocked the nation.



When the Beatles were discovered by young suburban females, the British Invasion took hold as The Rolling Stones, The Kinks, and The Who swept American record sales.



“Rock and roll is the most brutal, ugly, degenerate, vicious form of expression - lewd, sly, in plain fact, dirty - a rancid-smelling aphrodisiac and the martial music of every side-burned delinquent on the face of the earth.”  
- Frank Sinatra (1957)



## 1957 - JAMBOREE





# Counterculture

Sex, racism, poverty, loneliness, rejection of conformity, antiwar, criticism of materialism - these concepts had been banished from television and polite conversation in the 1950s only to return with a vengeance in the 1960s.

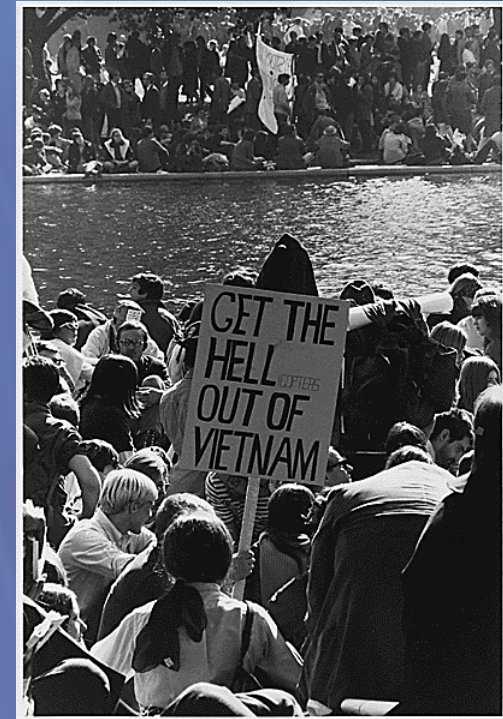
Young “hippies” rejected suburban conformity and experimented with lifestyles, fashion, food, religions, music, sex, and drugs.

Other groups organized politically to change some of the darker aspects of America that lurked underneath the surface of the 1950s.



# Election of 1968

Nixon presented the division in American politics as a “culture war” of “us” against “them.”



## ★ US

- ★ Conservative
- ★ Middle and working class
- ★ Church-going
- ★ Dressed appropriately
- ★ Respected authority
- ★ Supported actions in Vietnam

## ★ THEM

- ★ Liberal
- ★ Young
- ★ Defiant
- ★ Free love
- ★ Antiwar
- ★ Counterculture
- ★ Wanted to change American values





# Election of 1968

With the Democrats split between blue collar union workers, antiwar protesters, civil rights activists, and Southern segregationists, the Republicans easily won the election.

Nixon set out as president to relax Cold War tensions, bring troops home from Vietnam, lower taxes, and decrease the power of the federal government. He was largely successful in these goals as president.



**Détente** - In the late 1960s, President Nixon began to pursue a policy of “realpolitik” (practical politics) with China. His goal was to relax Cold War tensions and focus more on the benefits of trade and alliances. Soviets soon began to show an interest.



President Nixon with Chairman Mao

**SALT I & II** -  
(Strategic Arms  
Limitation Talks)  
1970s

Presidents Nixon  
and Carter met  
with Communist  
leaders to find a  
way to limit  
nuclear weapons.

# Environmentalism

After a century of full-blown industrialism, some Americans became concerned about the environmental effects.

Concerns about smog, wilderness conservation, landfills, and water resources led to increasing calls for regulation of the environment.

In 1962, Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, which documented the poisonous effects of the pesticide DDT on birds. One spring, the birds did not return to the farms she was studying.

# Environmentalism

Carson's book had a tremendous impact on emerging environmental groups, who began organizing and pushing for government to become more involved.

In 1970, during Nixon's administration, Congress created the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** to regulate pollution and use of resources.

Congress also stiffened standards for emissions and waste with the **Clean Air and Clean Water Acts.**



# Watergate Scandal

Unfortunately, Nixon was also successful at playing “dirty” politics.

In 1972, members of Nixon’s Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP), armed with wiretaps and document cameras, were arrested during a break-in at the Democratic Party headquarters in the Watergate Hotel.

At first, this was not front-page news. Slowly, two *Washington Post* reporters, **Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein**, began to uncover evidence linking the White House to the break-in.



Five men were arrested for the break-in. Four were anti-Castro Cuban exiles previously hired by the CIA. The fifth was CREEP's electronics expert.







# Watergate Scandal

Evidence began to show that Nixon himself had suggested payments of hush money, pressured the FBI to drop the investigation, recommended that staffers perjure themselves if subpoenaed, and possibly even ordered the break-in.

One after another White House official resigned, and Nixon's lawyer John Dean testified about Nixon's involvement in the cover-up.

Only the Oval Office tapes would reveal the truth. Nixon refused to release the tapes, claiming executive privilege.

**The Weather**  
 Today: Mostly cloudy with a few  
 cool showers of rain, high near 80.  
 Tue: Partly cloudy, high near 80.  
 Wed: Partly cloudy, high near 80.  
 Thurs: Partly cloudy, high near 80.  
 Fri: Partly cloudy, high near 80.  
 Sat: Partly cloudy, high near 80.

# The Washington Post

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## Nixon Says He Won't Resign



### Rhodes Will Vote To Impeach; House To Curtail Debate

By Richard L. Lamm and William Chapman  
 Rhodes will vote to impeach President Nixon, a move that would set in motion the process for his removal from office. The House Judiciary Committee today announced that it will vote for impeachment and the full House will vote on the matter in a quick session.

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### Feels Such a Step Would Be 'Outside The Constitution'

By Carroll Kilpatrick  
 Spiro T. Agnew, who has acknowledged that his name is in the line to succeed President Nixon, today said he feels such a step would be "outside the Constitution."

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### Resignation Urged By GOP Senators

By Kenneth B. ...  
 GOP senators today urged President Nixon to resign, saying that his continued presence in the White House would be a disgrace to the country.

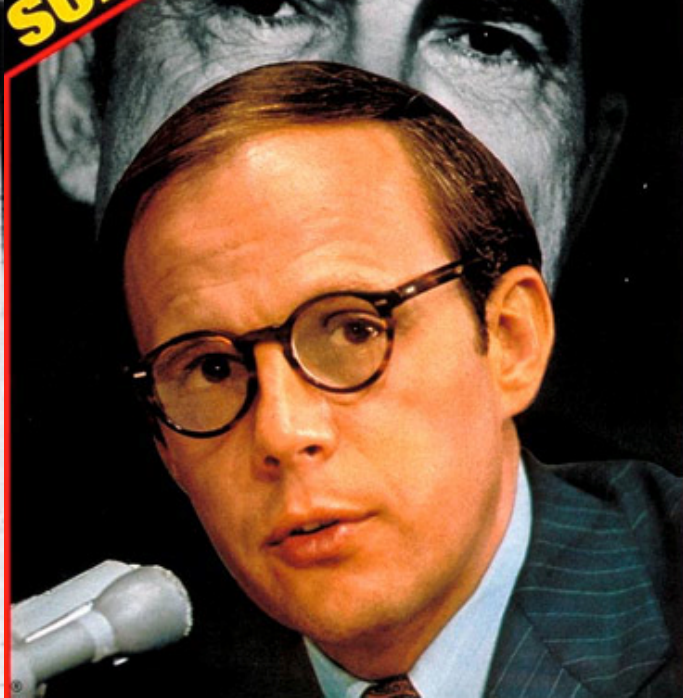
### Dismay Pervades White House Staff

By Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward  
 Dismay pervades the White House staff, who are watching the President's situation with growing concern.

FIFTY CENTS

**TIME**

**CAN NIXON SURVIVE DEAN?**



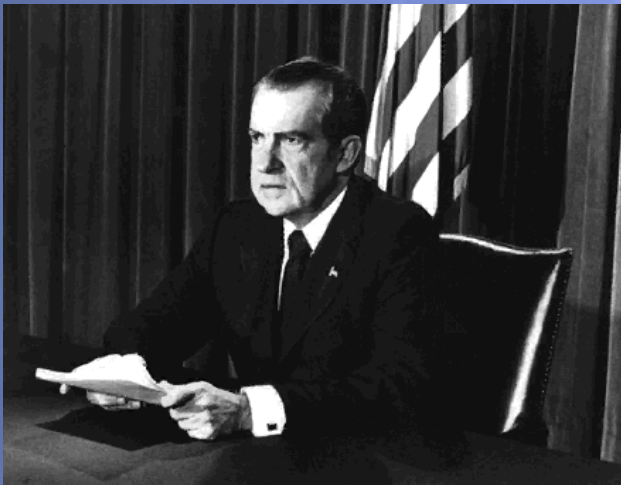
## John Dean testifies against Nixon.



# Watergate Scandal



In the Supreme Court case *US v. Nixon* (1974), the Court ruled that executive privilege did not apply, and Nixon was ordered to turn the tapes over to Congress.



Facing impeachment, Nixon resigned on Aug. 8, 1974. To the public's outrage, Nixon's successor Gerald Ford granted Nixon a full pardon.



# Nixon's Resignation

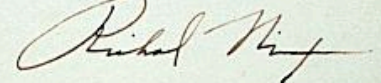
THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

August 9, 1974

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I hereby resign the Office of President of the  
United States.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Henry A. Kissinger  
The Secretary of State  
Washington, D. C. 20520

11:35 AM  
HK

"All the News  
That's Fit to Print"

# The New York Times

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## NIXON RESIGNS

### HE URGES A TIME OF 'HEALING'; FORD WILL TAKE OFFICE TODAY

#### 'Sacrifice' Is Praised; Kissinger to Remain

**By KENNETH BAKER**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9—It will probably be this tomorrow Vice President Ford, seated and in the focus, may have observed. There, tonight, the focus is cooperation, leadership, "one of the greatest, personal and intimate to where great sacrifices for the country and for America and good for the rest of the world, peace and order," he said.

On the left of all of it is at the moment.

Mr. Ford, who will take office as the 37th President of the United States tomorrow, said he was sure the country's future and the future of the world are in good hands and announced that Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger had agreed to stay on in the new Administration.

"I pledge to you tonight, as

#### The 37th President Is First to Quit Post

**By GUY WARD**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9—Richard Milhous Nixon, the 37th President of the United States, announced tonight that he had given up his long and arduous fight to remain in office and would resign, effective at noon tomorrow.

Donald Rumsfeld, Vice President, will be sworn in tomorrow at the same hour as the 37th President, to serve out the 488 days remaining in Mr. Nixon's second term.

Less than two years after the shocking re-election victory, Mr. Nixon, in a conciliatory address on national



**Speculation Rife  
On Vice President**

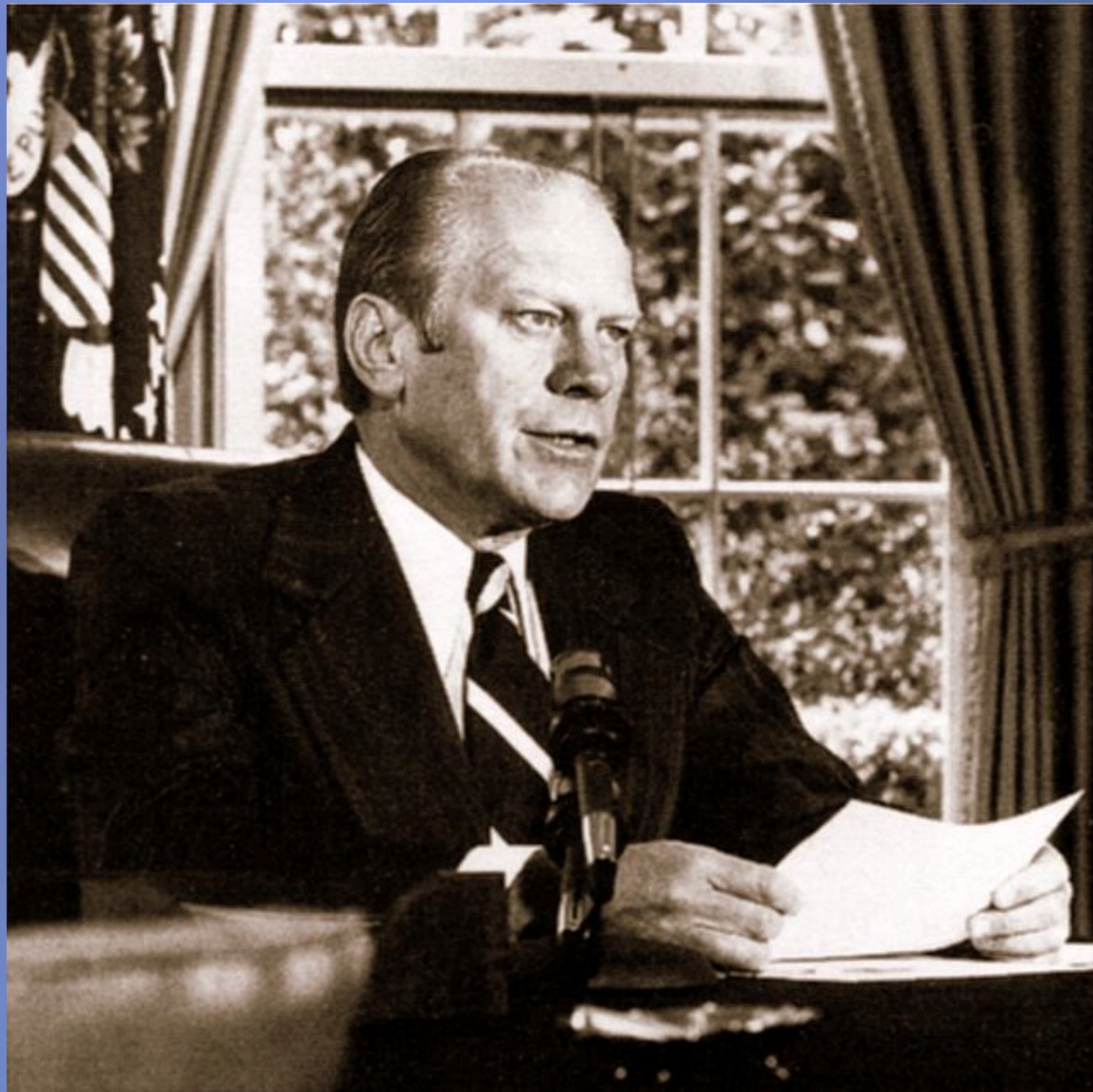
Some Ford Reactionists Say  
Selecting a Successor  
Could Face Work



**Political Scene  
Sharply Altered**

Rise and Fall  
Appraisal of Nixon Career

**JAWORSKI ASSERTS  
NO DEAL WAS MADE**



President Ford pardons Nixon before investigations can proceed. Traumatized by the secretive culture of the White House during Vietnam and Watergate, the American public begins to take a more cynical understanding of politics.